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District Attorney's Office Announces Research Partnership to Prevent Homicides in Cases of Intimate Partner Violence

AUSTIN, TX -- Today, the Travis County District Attorney's office announced its data and research partnership with Arizona State University and Johns Hopkins University as part of an effort to prevent and assess the risk of homicide in cases of intimate partner violence.

"We have a responsibility to do everything we can to prevent intimate partner homicides in our community," said Erin Martinson, Director of the Special Victims Unit. "This partnership will allow us to identify risk factors that most often lead to intimate partner homicide and to intervene in high-risk cases."

The study is funded by the National Institutes of Health and is led by national experts Dr. Jacquelyn Campbell, Dr. Jill Messing, and Dr. Jesenia Pizarro. The study team is comprised of researchers from various Texas Universities, and is endorsed by the Texas Council on Family Violence and the Law Enforcement Management Institute of Texas at Sam Houston University. Dr. Campbell previously led a study that informed the creation of domestic violence risk assessment tools used throughout the country, including right here in Travis County.

This research partnership will replicate and update the landmark study in order to study high risk factors in instances of domestic violence. The study will additionally include marginalized groups such as immigrants and LGBTQIA+ individuals, which will give the researchers the opportunity to examine risk factors among groups that have historically been overlooked in research. This research will inform the work of the Travis County's high-risk team housed in the District Attorney's office that seeks to intervene in cases of intimate partner violence that are at high risk for homicide.

The Travis County District Attorney's office takes violent crime very seriously. Since the beginning of this year the office has secured over 500 indictments on violent offenses, including charges of murder, kidnapping, sexual assault, aggravated assault, and violent crimes against children.

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